Lesson 4: Text b

Directions: Read the following text. Then answer questions 1 through 3.

Laws Are Kid Stuff

A 10-year-old works to get a law passed to save turtles.

by Jennifer Marino Walters

Addison Graham, 10, doesn't care *why* the chicken—or any animal—crossed the road. She just wants to make sure they can do it safely.

She is most concerned about turtles. She noticed the slow reptiles were getting hurt when they crossed a busy street in her hometown of Lakeville, Massachusetts. She decided to do something about it. Addison applied for—and received—a grant that paid for two turtle-crossing signs on the road.

Now, the fifth grader wants to help save an endangered local turtle—the Plymouth red-bellied cooter. She is working to convince her state lawmakers to pass a law that would name it the Massachusetts State Turtle. She hopes that the title will raise awareness of the turtle's plight.

When state lawmakers visited her school, Addison explained why they should support her law. Then she learned all she could about the lawmaking process.

"[A bill] has to go through so many steps [to become a law]!" Addison says. "It has to [be passed by] the Senate and the House [of Representatives], and then it goes to the governor."

The way in which a bill becomes a law in Massachusetts and other states is similar to the lawmaking process of our national government in Washington, D.C. Each September, kids across the United States learn all about that process and the US government. September 17 is Constitution Day—the anniversary of the signing of the

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US Constitution in 1787. The Constitution is an important document that set up the structure of the US government.

Three Branches

The Constitution divides the federal government into three branches, which share power: Executive, Legislative, and Judicial.

The Legislative Branch (Congress) makes laws. The Executive Branch, which includes the President, the Vice President, and the President's advisers, enforces the laws. The Judicial Branch—the Supreme Court and lower federal courts—makes sure that our laws and actions are allowed under the Constitution.

The US Constitution also guarantees that America is a democracy—a place where people freely elect their leaders. And the historic document ensures that everyone has basic rights, like freedom of speech and the right to ask the government to take action.

By lobbying for a new state law, Addison is exercising that right. She says she is happy for the chance to take an active role in her state government.

"Anybody can do something—even if you're 5, 10, or 13," Addison says. "You're never too young to make a difference!"

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson 4: Practice Test b

Chunking Long Sentences

Directions: Use "Laws Are Kid Stuff" to answer the questions.

1. **This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.**

Part A: What are <u>two</u> ways that Addison is helping turtles in her state?

A) She is asking for a new state law.

B) She is asking the President for a new law.

C) She is responsible for having signs put up in her community.

D) She is asking for her friends and neighbors to help.

Part B: Write a sentence in your own words based on evidence from the text to support your answer to Part A.

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2. What does the Judicial Branch of government do?

A) It makes the laws.

B) It enforces the laws.

C) It makes sure laws are allowed.

D) It asks for and writes new laws.

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3. This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A: What is one purpose of the Constitution?

A) It gives Congress the most power in the federal government.

B) It gives people the right to choose their leaders.

C) It allows the courts to make new laws under the Constitution.

D) It allows people to enforce the laws made by Congress.

Part B: To help save the turtles, Addison would like to change the law in Massachusetts. Based on the text, what Constitutional rights is she exercising to accomplish her goal? Give examples.

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